ELEGIES.

I.

ON THE DEATH OF

SAMUEL FOOTE, Esq.

II.

ON AGE.

BY THOMAS HOLCROFT,

Of the Theatre Royal, Drury-Lane.

LONDON,

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[Price One Shilling.]

ELEGIES.

I.

ON THE DEATH OF

SAMUEL FOOTE, Esq.

ON A GRAVE

BY THOMAS MONCRIEFF.

[Price One Shilling.]

ADVERTISEMENT.

EVERY one who amuſes himſelf with writing Works of Imagination, has a View to either Profit or Fame. Though the Author of the following Trifles does not pretend to be above ſuch Motives, yet he hopes his Anxiety is not powerful enough to render him unhappy one Moment, ſhould he be entirely diſappointed. He is ſenſible how much Succeſs depends upon Circumſtances. A Poem muſt be read before it can be admired; nay more, it muſt be read with ſome Share of that Temper and Spirit in which it was written, or it will appear languid. A good Character, or a bad one, given by thoſe Gentlemen

who take upon themſelves the Office of Public Cenſors in literary Matters, will frequently, at leaſt for a Time, determine its Fate. As he is entirely unknown, he is not in any Dread of a partial Sentence. If theſe Poems are worthleſs, let them reſt in that Oblivion which is the utmoſt Happineſs Unworthineſs can know: if the contrary happens to be the Caſe, he has no doubt but their Merits will be ſeen and acknowledged by every one whom Heaven has bleſt with Taſte and Judgment ſufficient to form the true Critic.

ELEGY.

ELEGY I.

ON THE

Death of S. FOOTE, Esq.

ELEGY.

I.

AH! what avails the fancied Lore of Man,
Or all the envied Gifts the Gods beſtow?
His Wiſdom Folly, Length of Time a Span,
His Life is Vanity, his Death is Woe!

II.

Could Wit protect, had Genius power to ſave,
Did they immortal Life with Fame impart,
Alexis ne'er had known a dreary Grave,
Death ne'er had drench'd an Arrow in his Heart.

III.

III.

Mourn, mourn, ye Spirits, who delight in Mirth;
In yonder Tomb Alexis breathleſs lies;
The Soul of Wit, that gave your Laughter Birth,
Inhabits, once again, her native Skies.

IV.

How fix'd thoſe Features which ſo well pourtray'd
The Cobweb Virtues of the canting Saint;
How dull thoſe Eyes that could ſo well upbraid,
And Mimas' Vice in Mimas' Manner paint.

V.

Weep, ye who bend beneath the ſavage Rod
Of ſtern Oppreſſion, ſpurning human Laws,
Your Champion, cover'd by yon ſenſeleſs Sod,
Hears not your Griefs, or ſure he'd plead your Cauſe.

VI.

Rejoice, ye Sons of Rapine; lo! your Foe,
Who dragg'd your dark Miſdeeds to public Shame,
Your ſcourge is fled, no longer ſhall ye know
The Stings of guilty Terror at his Name.

VII.

Where's now the pliant Muſcle big with Whim,
The Eye that fill'd with Laughter ev'ry Face,
The various Voice, the oft-diſtorted Limb,
And all the mirth-fed Features of Grimace?

VIII.

How ghaſtly *now* his Grin! No latent Spark
Of new-found Wit ſheds Dimples o'er his Cheek;
No heavy Blockhead dreads himſelf the Mark
On whom the biting Gibe ſhall ſhortly break.

IX.

Where now the Shouts that Theatres have rent,
While Laughter roar'd and begg'd to be reliev'd?
Ah! where the Plaudits every Hand has ſent,
When Humour brought forth all that Wit conceiv'd?

X.

Mourn, every Muse, in Elegiac Song,
In Metre melancholic let it flow;
Adown the doleful Breeze your Griefs prolong
In Wails, and Sighs, and Tears, ſhrill, ſad and flow.

XI.

But oh! THALIA, be thy Sorrows loud,
Tho' all-unus'd to Accents ſo ſevere;
Ah! ſhed the Drop moſt precious o'er his Shroud,
For ſure a Son like him deſerves a Tear.

XII.

Full well he once was known thy dear Delight;
Thou ne'er deny'd'ſt whate'er he deign'd to aſk,
Thy choiceſt Pen was his whene'er he'd write,
And his, whene'er he'd act, thy choiceſt Maſk.

XIII.

Ye ſhagged SATYRS, leave the deep Receſs,
The dark cloſe Woodland, and the braky Dell;
Quit every pointed Weapon of Redreſs,
Hear! ſhriek and hear! your Fav'rite's paſſing Bell.

XIV.

No more we catch *your* Meaning from *his* Eye,
No more he wields the many-barbed Dart,
Or guides your galling Arrows as they fly,
To ſtrike the guilty Sinner thro' the Heart.

XV.

Ye light-wing'd SPRITES, who ſport in Fancy's Dome,
With Freaks and Bounds in antic Circles play,
Attend your kindred Genius to his Home,
Proclaim him welcome to the Realms of Day.

XVI.

Ye SYLPHS, who down the Sun-beams love to flit,
And round the Poet's Temples Laurel twine,
Or, jocund, on the dancing Ignis ſit,
Or quaff from azure Streams ætherial Wine,

XVII.

Forſake your Sports; and, if you know to weep,
If e'er your ſilken Lids ſuſtain ſuch Dew,
Here pour your Tears,—behold, in endleſs Sleep,
The Swain who all your Haunts and Frolics knew!

XVIII.

Ye FAUNS and FAIRIES, whereſoe'er ye rove,
O'er Hill, o'er Dale, or mid the Virgin Throng;
Ye NYMPHS, ye DRYADS, of the Brook, the Grove,
Who ſing ſo ſweet in many a witching Song;

XIX.

Come, FANCY'S OFFSPRING, every CHILD of VERSE,
Whatever Clime your printleſs Feet ſhall tread;
Aſſemble ALL,—alternate Griefs rehearſe,
In ſolemn Song funereal Honours ſhed.

XX.

And as ye paſs the Mountain, Mead, or Dell,
Where laviſh Nature ſtrews her Gifts profuſe,
From Hawthorn's Point, Grub's Beard, or Lilly's Bell,
Collect the Sweets that moſt delight the Muſe.

XXI.

Bring every Spell and Charm, each Fruit and Flower,
Each Herb, each Plant to Poet fragrant found;
With all due Rites erect the Cypreſs Bower,
And bleſs the Turf, and conſecrate the Ground.

XXII.

Then while coy Phœbe grants her glimm'ring Beam,
And flitting Ghoſts entrance the fearful Eye,
On broken Vows while Maids, forſaken, dream,
And ſtart and weep with many a mournful Sigh;

XXIII.

While wanton Rear-Mouſe winds her mazy Rout,
And ſqueaks, to liſt'ning Glow-Worm, antic Song;
Your Vigils keep—with ſhrill and ſudden Shout
Scare each unhallow'd Foot from forth your Throng.

XXIV.

Enough, fair FANCY, lightly bound away;—
Advance PHILOSOPHY. Lo! TRUTH appears,
Who, with her ſober Mien, and moral Lay,
Foretels the ſad Events of future Years.

XXV.

Young Ammon*, once admir'd, belov'd, obey'd,
Graſp'd half the Globe, and daſt the Hours away;
Crowns gave for Playthings, Slaves of Monarchs made,
Then dropt a little Lump of lifeleſs Clay.

XXVI.

Now what avails the fair hiſtoric Page,
Where all his Acts are blazon'd to the World?
What tho' th'Antipodes once felt his Rage,
And 'gainſt the Poles his Thunderbolts were hurl'd?

* Alexander the Great.

XXVII. Had

XXVII.

Had he not better far, in peaceful Lore,
Turn'd o'er the moral Page, and ſmil'd ſerene,
Than, thus delighting in the Battle's Roar,
T'have made the ſhrieking World one tragic Scene?

XXVIII.

Loſt is his Valour; loſt, to him, his Fame;
He heeds not, hears not, RUMOUR's fickle Blaſt;
And all who live to hear and read his Name
Are poſting after him with heedleſs Haſte.

XXIX.

With fancied Dignity important grown,
Man acts as tho' his Follies were to laſt;
Builds, plants, or mounts, perhaps, a thorn-ſtrew'd Throne,
Dies, rots, and gives the Worms a ſhort Repaſt.

XXX.

What melancholy Scenes ſalute his Eyes,
Prophetic Leſſons of approaching Fate;
Still he purſues each Phantom as it flies,
And loſes Happineſs in finding State.

XXXI.

Bleſt be the Sons of Science, Nymph ſublime!
She lures her Children to the calm Retreat,
And ſolves the Problem, and ſuggeſts the Rhyme,
And to the dulcet Sound directs the Feet.

XXXII.

She prompts the Song to Love, to Peace, and Joy;
The matchleſs Muſic of Content ſhe chants;
Her heav'n-born Beauties ne'er her Lovers cloy,
She knows no Sorrows, for ſhe feels no Wants.

XXXIII.

She philoſophic Temp'rance loves to chear,
And bids to ſhun, like Death, imagin'd Ills;
Their Sweets are bitter thro' the plenteous Year
Who know no Medium to their wayward Wills.

XXXIV.

Bleſt be Alexis! Science loves the Name;
He well approv'd him of her darling Race;
And be that Wretch accurſt who damns his Fame,
Or would his little Follies backward trace!

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She lures her Children to the calm Retreat,
And ſolves the Problem, and ſuggeſts the Rhyme,
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ELEGY II.

ON

AGE.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THERE is not any Thing, I believe, which calls forth the melancholy and ſympathetic Paſſions more forcibly than a Sight of thoſe Men who have once been great or famous, and have outlived their Fortune or Faculties. Who can forbear ſighing when he beholds a BELISARIUS? Whoſe Heart is not wrung when he views a SWIFT in his Dotage?---Reflections of this Kind gave Birth to the following Stanzas. They were written upon an old Man in a Country-Village, whoſe Strength, Activity, and ruſtic Accompliſhments, were once the frequent Admiration of his Fellow-Swains; and when Age had deprived

him of them, and rendered him feeble and decrepid, the Remembrance of his paſt Exploits was often the Subject of their Exclamations, and the honeſt Motive of their Pity and Condolence, as well as the frequent Topic of his own Lamentation. The Effect that this Remembrance had upon his Mind cannot, perhaps, be conveyed more feelingly than by informing the Reader that the Sentence which I have choſen for a Motto was common in his Mouth, and generally attended with a Sigh.

ELEGY.

ELEGY.

"There is a Time to be born, and a Time to die."

I.

I ONCE was young, alack the Day!
And Mirth and Jollity my Theme;
Now fourſcore Summers, flown away,
Appear a half-forgotten Dream.

II.

I once could dance, who nimbler ſeen
When May-Day Garlands deck'd the Pole?
Or, Prize propos'd to glide the Green,
Who ſooner reach'd the diſtant Goal?

III. How

III.

How ſlow and feeble now my Tread!
Thoſe Feet which erſt have won the Prize
Are only ſwift to reach the Bed
Where, undiſtinguiſh'd, Merit lies.

IV.

This Arm athletic once could raiſe
The maſſy Beam, the pond'rous Stone;
Loud echo'd forth the Village Praiſe
When I the whirling Quoit have thrown.

V.

Behold it wither'd, now, and weak,
Its brawny Texture quite forgot;
Its languid Pulſe, ſlow winding, ſeek
The Manſion where to reſt and rot!

VI.

When I into the Circle ſprung,
What hardy Youth durſt e'er engage?
Who but would check his daring Tongue,
If, much provok'd, he ſaw my Rage?

VII.

Where's now the Terror of my Eye?
What Coward quakes tho' I ſhould frown?
When agile Feats they yearly try,
Who brings to me the feſtive Crown?

VIII.

My auburn Ringlets, once ſo gay,
Could win the Sigh, the wiſhing Glance;
And envied went that Laſs away
Who join'd me in the ruſtic Dance.

IX.

My bald Head, ſprinkled o'er with grey,
Wins nothing but predictive Tears,
Reminding Man, from Day to Day,
Th'Effects of much-deſired Years.

X.

I once could ſing, what Voice ſo ſweet
Could charm an inattentive Ear?
Or move the merry-making Feet,
Or melt the ſighing Virgin's Tear?

XI.

Who now delights to hear my Voice?
Who now ſhall preſs the cheerly Song?
Who now ſhall liſten? who rejoice?
Or give the Praiſe they gave me young?

XII.

Alas! what Voice hath drooping Age
To charm the ſprightly Ear of Youth?
His Eye delights not in the Sage,
His Heart delights not in the Truth.

FINIS.